



iJERResearch

International Journal of Education and Research

Vol. 1, Number 1, March - 2026 | Peer-Reviewed Journal

ISSN 2764-9733 | ijerresearch.org

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.19417349

THE IMPORTANCE OF ONGOING EDUCATION ON LITERACY PNAIC AND CNCA: FROM TEACHER TO TEACHER

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ABSTRACT

This article proposes a reflection on the importance of continuing education for elementary school teachers in the early years, by university professors who are directly linked to the teaching-learning process through government programs and bring new perspectives on teaching methods such as literacy and the exchange of experiences among education professionals for the construction of meaningful knowledge. The text aims not only to acknowledge the importance of PNAIC and CNCA training for teachers, but also the positive impact that the collective constructions in each training session have on students in the classroom. These continuous formative encounters have transformed and continue to transform not only IDEB data, for example, but the lives of all those involved in the process of social transformation through the improvement of educational practice.

Keywords: Teaching Practice. Continuing Education. Transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The practice of continuing education has been a constant concern for the Education Departments of Brazilian municipalities. Each year, municipal administrators seek to offer initial training for their teachers, training that is mostly offered and delivered by consulting firms and specialists who often lack formal teacher training but rather hold various specializations. This raises the question: how can someone not intimately connected to the educational reality properly address something so delicate and important for the development of a given community and society? Previously, many training programs were offered in a content-focused and traditional way, which we can compare to Freire's statement below.

Instead of communicating, the educator makes "announcements" and deposits that the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the "banking" concept of education, in which the only margin of action offered to the students is to receive the deposits, keep them, and file them away. A margin for them to be collectors or filers of the things they archive. In the end, however, the great archived objects are the people themselves, in this (at best) misguided "banking" concept of education. Archived, because, outside of the search, outside of praxis, people cannot be. Educator and students are archived to the extent that, in this distorted view of education, there is no creativity, no transformation, no knowledge (FREIRE, 1987, p. 33).

In this sense, we also need to understand the relationship between elementary school teachers and higher education teachers who work in the creation of study materials and continuing education programs, so that they can see themselves as mediators of their students' learning in the literacy cycle, and no longer with the egocentrism of being the holders of knowledge, forcing their students to learn in the same way that they themselves were taught.

Thus, the relationship between those who teach and those who learn, and the numerous factors involved in this complex relationship, still seem obscure or even poorly understood, given the limited investment in this discussion and in the didactic-pedagogical training of both novice and veteran teachers (RAMALHO, 2006).

The practice of teaching as we understand it today requires a solid humanistic education, not only in the scientific content of the disciplines themselves, but also in aspects related to teaching methods, the handling of the various variables that characterize teaching, preparation and constant updating, and respect for students, seeing them holistically, perceiving them as social individuals possessing knowledge acquired inside or outside of school, knowledge that needs to be valued and explored to facilitate learning within the classroom. As Freire states in his quote below:

“What I am proposing is a profound respect for the cultural identity of the students, a cultural identity that implies respect for the language of the other, the color of the other, the gender of the other, the social class of the other, the sexual orientation of the other, the intellectual capacity of the other; which implies the capacity to stimulate the creativity of the other.” (Freire, 2014)

From this Freirean perspective, the teacher needs above all to understand in practice what theory presents as so distant from their realities. For this to happen, the teacher needs to be in a constant process of training, ensuring that their practice is consistent with current educational needs. Continuing education is capable of transforming theory into something real, bringing the teacher closer to the student so that the teaching-learning process happens from one to the other and with one another through the exchange of experiences.

The advances promoted by PNAIC were strengthened and expanded by the Literate Child Program, which continued this commitment to education in the early years. The National Commitment to a Literate Child maintained the concern with the training of literacy teachers, offering technical and pedagogical support to ensure that classroom practices were inclusive, diverse, and aligned with the contemporary needs of education.

Just as in the PNAIC , the CNCA reaffirms the essential role of higher education professors in the training of primary school teachers, consolidating the dialogue between theory and practice, and recognizing education as an instrument of social, emotional, and human transformation. Both programs have demonstrated that investing in teacher qualification and valuing the exchange of experiences is fundamental to building a more equitable and effective public education system.

When a teacher wishes to teach their students critically and constructively, so that they achieve the desired objectives, they need to think of a method that can be worked according to the reality in which these students find themselves. This requires creativity and playfulness, which should always be present in their classrooms, a point that was more than evident and referenced in the PNAIC (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age) and continues in the CNCA (National Curriculum Framework for Children and Adolescents). To better explain what a method is, Correa and Salch (2007, p. 10) state that:

The word "method" has its origin in Greek. Methods refers to the path to reach a goal. In a more general sense, it refers to a way of acting, a manner of proceeding, a means; in a more specific sense, it refers to the planning of a series of operations that must be carried out, including anticipating potential errors, in order to reach a certain end.

This highlights the need to use a method, but it's important to understand that no single method is considered the best or only one. The PNAIC (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age) brought precisely the understanding that if students learn in different ways and at different times, a single, rigid methodology cannot be conceived. Therefore, it is through observation and the exchange of experiences offered in CNCA (National Center for Cultural Activities) training that teachers can change, adapt, and reassess their practices in order to improve teaching, and this has been the key to the progress observed in Brazilian education since 2013.

When we consider literacy, which is also one of the foundations of the teaching proposal of these two government programs, we observe a clear understanding that this same process occurs with the continuing education offered to teachers in rural, indigenous, and quilombola communities. This has made and continues to make these programs accessible tools that are socially concerned with all the realities found in Brazil, taking into account their specific characteristics.

So that all teachers, wherever they may be, can bring to their classrooms the practical application of theory that best suits their daily work.

Higher education teaching and its relationship to the literacy process through government programs

What does higher education teaching have to do with this topic? Everything, after all, continuing education requires an understanding of theories that can be effectively applied in the classroom, improving and facilitating the teaching-learning process. To ensure this positive relationship, a group of professors from the Federal University of Pernambuco – UFPE began a study on literacy in early childhood education and the first years of elementary school.

These training programs designed by these professors at UFPE would only work if they researched new combinations of practices and theories for constructing knowledge, new ways of evaluating, and the processes that children go through until they become literate.

The entire PNAIC training program was based on the perspective of literacy learning, which consists of bringing students' lived experiences into the school, observing and problematizing the social function that language and mathematics have in children's lives. To this end, it is also necessary to reflect on teaching practices in the classroom, given that many teachers still have a traditional view of teaching, as in the case of assessment, for example.

From this perspective, the trainer's task, in relation to their learning, refers to factors that are "theoretical and practical, intelligent and creative, allowing the professional to act in unstable, indeterminate, and complex contexts" (ALARCÃO, 1998, p. 13). The performance of the reflective professional is the product of an integrated mixture of science, technique, and art, "based on the awareness of the capacity for thought and reflection that characterizes the human being as creative and not as a mere reproducer of ideas and practices that are external to them [...] acting in an intelligent and flexible, situated and reactive way " (ALARCÃO, 2007, p. 41).

Alarcão's thought reflects the concern of thinking about an education where both university students and elementary school children learn to think and position themselves in the world. The PNAIC study notebooks brought precisely this perception of valuing what the student thinks and encouraging their full development, no longer just encoding and decoding. This same thinking and actions were guaranteed with the arrival of CNCA, which was built from the experience gained from the operation and application of PNAIC throughout the national territory. Therefore, it is appropriate to affirm that:

It is certain that professional competence implies knowledge situated in holistic, creative, personal action, building knowledge that depends, among other things, on the professional's ability to appreciate the value of their decisions and the consequences that result from them (ALARCÃO, 1996).

Once again, we realize that the work of teaching is realized in the act of teaching, as a way of contributing to the process of humanization and respect for social reality, in which historically it becomes necessary to develop knowledge and skills that enable the construction of one's own knowledge from the challenges that teaching as a social practice demands, thus allowing the creation of one's own identity. An identity that, according to Pimenta:

It is a process of constructing the historically situated subject, this being built from the social significance of the profession; from constant revision and traditions. It can also be constructed by the meaning that each teacher, as actor and author, confers on the teaching activity in their daily life based on their values, their way of situating themselves in the world, their life history, their representations, their knowledge, their anxieties and desires, and the meaning that being a teacher has in their life (1999, p. 18).

These professionals had long yearned for training that would bring real change to their classrooms, successful experiences that could be shared with their colleagues, and a recognition of the teaching profession in a way that would effectively transform the reality of literacy in Brazil.

Understanding the backgrounds of study advisors and literacy teachers. from PNAIC

Study advisors undergo an initial 40-hour training program, during which the cultural needs of their municipalities for their continuing education are discussed. These advisors, in turn, seek situations that encourage reflection and knowledge building for ongoing teacher training. One focus of this training is precisely to reflect on practices, monitor and assist literacy teachers in their daily practices. After this initial meeting, four meetings will be held between the study advisors and their respective trainers, who are university professors, all holding master's degrees in Portuguese language and mathematics, which facilitates dialogue and the meaningfulness of the exchange and continuing education process.

Literacy teachers in their respective municipalities will receive monthly training sessions of 8 to 12 hours, totaling 80 hours at the end of each year. Through the exchange of experiences and new teaching perspectives, these literacy teachers will be able to bring diverse practices and activities to their classrooms, which will facilitate the teaching and learning process for children aged 6 to 8.

Understanding how training programs function and their direct and indirect integration between elementary and higher education teachers, it is observed that the clear and familiar language used in the materials, which include several examples from literacy teachers, facilitates classroom work in its various aspects.

According to data from the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb) of 2013, after the implementation of PNAIC training programs, the country surpassed the targets set for the initial years (1st to 5th grade) of elementary school by 0.3 points. The national Ideb for this stage was 5.2, while in 2011 it was 5.0. The initial years of elementary school are primarily offered by municipal networks, which account for 81.6% of public school enrollments at this stage. The total number of students in the first years of elementary school is 15,764,926, with 84% of them (13,188,037) attending public schools. The targets for the municipal education network were achieved by 69.7% of Brazilian municipalities.

Considering this data, the success of PNAIC in the early years of elementary education is clear. This success was achieved collectively and brought a new reality to Brazilian literacy, where the importance of an education based on the critical construction of knowledge modifies not only educational data but also the lives of those involved in it. Thinking about Freire's vision of knowledge construction, we observe the importance of the teacher being, above all, a researcher in search of new ways of teaching and learning. This is what happens in PNAIC training programs when the exchange of experiences confirms Freire's theory that:

There is no teaching without research and no research without teaching. These activities are intertwined. As continuous teaching, I am constantly searching and researching . I teach because I search, because I have inquired, because I inquire and question myself. I research to ascertain, and by ascertaining, I intervene; by intervening, I educate and educate myself. I research to know what I do not yet know and to communicate or announce the new information (FREIRE, 1996, p. 32).

Teaching should involve the pursuit of new ways of teaching and learning, through inquiries that transform research into concrete action. For Freire, this search for being and learning to learn coexists with the teaching profession, which presents itself as liberating in terms of the construction of the being in its fullness, questioning reality and transforming it into something just and equal for all. Education also requires encouraging students from childhood to value their culture and the environment in which they live, extracting from both the best for the transformation of their lives.

It is from this perspective that the PNAIC's ongoing training sessions take place monthly, with the sharing of activities applied in classrooms, dialogued presentation of didactic sequences planned to address students' difficulties, presenting diverse activities such as games, storytelling, and other actions that have transformed classes into enjoyable learning moments. All of this is supported by the pedagogical team of the municipal training staff, who also participate in training with university professors. These professors were involved in the creation of printed materials and the overall organization of the PNAIC in Pernambuco. Everything is designed to improve literacy outcomes in the early years. The program aims to ensure that all children are literate by the age of eight, not just in the mechanical sense of coding and decoding, but in a comprehensive literacy process that considers the student's critical awareness of the world around them, the social function of what they learn at school, always starting from their own environment to build a better and more equal society for all. The proposal is not only to integrate them into school and the world , but to include them in their fullest sense, thus guaranteeing their constitutional rights, among them one that is essential and is enshrined in the LDBEN - Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education - in its Article 1: Education encompasses the formative processes that develop in family life, in human interaction, at work, in educational and research institutions, in social movements and civil society organizations, and in cultural manifestations.

In this way, dreaming of an education system that works is getting closer and closer to our reality, and investing in teacher training is to guarantee meaningful learning for everyone, without distinction.

Training of Facilitators and Trainers in the National Commitment to a Literate Child: Challenges and Potential

The National Commitment to Literate Children (CNCA), an initiative of the Ministry of Education, aims to ensure that all children in Brazil are literate by the age of 8. To achieve this goal, the program establishes a network of professionals involved in a continuous training process, which includes municipal, regional, and state coordinators. The training of municipal coordinators, with a workload of 24 hours per year, distributed in 8-hour meetings each, is one of the essential steps for the success of the program. During these meetings, the pedagogical guidelines of the CNA are addressed, allowing the coordinators to plan and implement strategies adapted to the reality of each municipality. As highlighted by the Ministry of Education (2019), "the flexibility of the training allows the coordinators to adjust to local specificities, ensuring that pedagogical practices meet regional needs" (BRAZIL, 2019, p. 7).

Regional coordinators, who are responsible for coordinating municipal coordinators, also participate in training sessions focused on providing a broader and more strategic vision of the program's actions. These professionals need to work to ensure integration between municipalities and the achievement of CNCA's goals. According to the Ministry of Education, "regional coordinators must be trained to act as facilitators of the process, guiding and monitoring actions at the local level" (BRAZIL, 2019, p. 11). In addition, state trainers, responsible for the technical training of coordinators and teachers, participate in 32 hours annually, distributed across four 8-hour meetings. This training aims to ensure that state trainers, who work directly with municipal trainers who need to pass on this training to their municipal teachers, maintain a network that is interconnected and in constant partnership. According to the MEC (2019), "state and municipal trainers play a crucial role in building solid pedagogical knowledge and preparing educators to face the challenges of the literacy process" (BRASIL, 2019, p. 13).

The National Commitment to a Literate Child and its dialogue with the PNAIC (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age)

Continuing education programs have become fundamental to filling gaps in initial teacher training, especially in undergraduate and pedagogy courses, which often lack consistent practical experience. In this sense, programs such as PNAIC and Criança Alfabetizada play a crucial role, offering teachers a space for reflection and improvement of pedagogical practices, connecting them directly to the realities of the classroom.

Initial teacher training courses, despite their theoretical relevance, often fail to address the complexities of daily school life. Topics such as classroom management, literacy strategies in challenging contexts, inclusion of students with specific difficulties, and the connection between theory and practice are treated superficially or relegated to the background. This deficiency in initial training contributes to many teachers arriving in the classroom unprepared to deal with the real challenges of teaching, highlighting the importance of initiatives such as continuing education programs.

The training programs offered by the Literate Child Program, for example, stand out for providing not only theoretical updates for teachers, but also for offering practical opportunities that allow for the re-evaluation of their methodologies. Unlike the traditional approach that prevails in higher

education courses, these training programs place teachers at the center of a dialogical process, in which they share experiences and build collaborative solutions to common problems faced in the daily school routine.

Furthermore, the program emphasizes the idea that student learning is closely linked to the continuous learning of teachers. Inspired by the Freirean perspective, it recognizes the classroom as a living space where teaching practice needs to be constantly renewed and adapted to the needs of students. This type of training allows teachers to understand how practice can be enriched by theory, and vice versa, creating a virtuous cycle of training that benefits the entire school community.

In this way, continuing education programs are presented as an essential complement to initial training, functioning as a laboratory for deepening pedagogical practice. They enable teachers to develop skills that were not fully explored in their academic training, such as the use of educational technologies, the planning of interdisciplinary activities, and the creation of strategies for literacy in a diverse social and cultural context.

The connection between educational practice and the real needs of the school, promoted by programs such as the Literate Child program, also strengthens the teacher's self-confidence, who begins to recognize themselves as an agent of transformation. This transformation directly impacts the quality of education, bringing benefits to students and society as a whole.

Therefore, reinforcing the continuity and expansion of these continuing education programs is essential to ensure that Brazilian basic education is capable of forming conscious, critical citizens prepared for the challenges of the 21st century. Only through solid, practical, and dialogical training will teachers be able to fully exercise their role as mediators and facilitators of the teaching-learning process.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Continuing education plays a fundamental role in the qualification of teachers, especially with regard to literacy. Although initial training provides a necessary theoretical foundation, it is not always able to address the complexities of the classroom, such as student management, adapting teaching methods to different realities, and including students with specific needs. In this sense, programs such as PNAIC (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age) and CNCA (National Commitment to a Literate Child) have emerged and remain powerful solutions, providing educators with continuous and contextualized training. These programs not only expand teachers' theoretical repertoire but also offer practical tools to face the challenges of daily school life, which strengthens the quality of the literacy process for children.

The PNAIC and CNCA are examples of how continuing education can help overcome an existing gap between the theory learned in initial training and the reality of the classroom. As described in the text above, CNCA offers practical and dialogical training, in which teachers share experiences and build collective solutions to educational problems. This collaborative approach reflects the Freirean perspective, which values learning as a continuous process for both students and teachers. This integration between theory and practice allows educators to feel more prepared to innovate in their methodologies and transform their classes into meaningful learning spaces for all students, especially with regard to literacy.

Therefore, the importance of continuing education goes beyond simple theoretical updating. It is fundamental to creating a virtuous cycle of teaching and learning, in which teachers not only apply acquired knowledge but also revisit their practices, adapting to emerging needs. Continuing education programs, such as CNCA, promote the empowerment of educators, which directly results in an education more conscious of its social function in the lives of children, in the pursuit of the full

development of the citizen.

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